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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

*Memorandum*



APPROVED FOR RELEASE  
DATE: JAN 2002

THE CRISIS  
USSR/CUBA

Information as of 0600  
20 November 1962

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PREPARED FOR THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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~~TOP SECRET~~

109

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SC No. 11209/62

20 November 1962

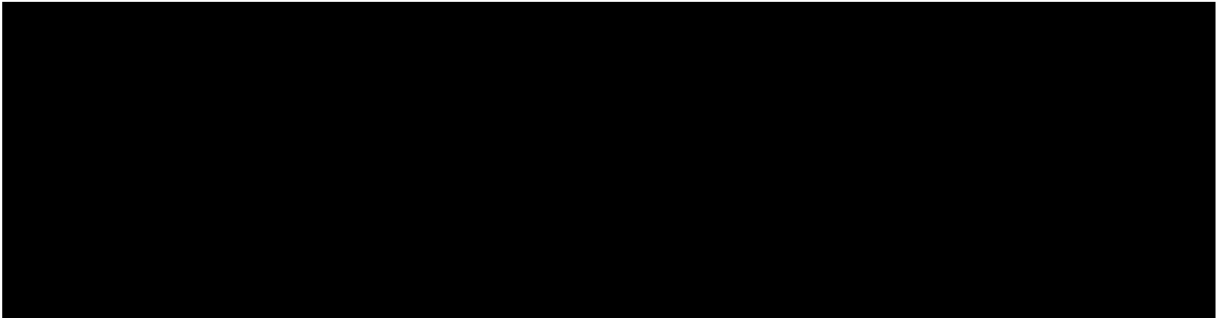
CUBAN INTERNAL SITUATION

Castro's 19 November letter to U Thant expressing Cuba's willingness to accede to any Soviet decision to remove the IL-28s from Cuba may presage a Kuznetsov offer along these lines in meetings later today with US negotiator McCloy. The new letter was publicized by Radio Havana shortly after a Mikoyan meeting with Castro, Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, and other Cuban officials--the first such official meeting known to have transpired since 6 November. The Castro-Mikoyan meeting plus the subsequent letter to U Thant may indicate that Mikoyan is about to leave Cuba, although there is no reliable information to this effect yet available.

The admission by Castro in his letter that the IL-28s "belong to the Soviet government" in effect eliminates Cuba from US-USSR negotiations over their disposition. At the same time the letter emphasizes those aspects of the crisis which Castro regards as wholly Cuban: his refusal to permit inspection of offensive weapons sites and aerial surveillance. He makes no reference to his "five points," which suggests he has been unable to persuade the USSR to make them conditions for the settlement.

Removal of the 42 IL-28s from Cuba would reduce Castro's inventory of bomber aircraft to the several B-26s which had been acquired under the Batista regime.

There was no photographic coverage of Cuba yesterday.

  
Cuban radio programs are charging that the US arrest of several Cubans for sabotage activities in the United States is illegal and trumped up and initiates a "wave of

-1-

TOP SECRET 

~~TOP SECRET~~

persecution" by "repressive agencies" against both Cubans and peace-loving Americans. They also feature statements that Cuban Roberto Santiesteban was detained illegally in view of his "diplomatic immunity" and was "brutally beaten."

[REDACTED]

The ban on all commercial flights by domestic and foreign airlines continues in force, with one indication from a Reuters item of 19 November that at least one flight, carrying two Cuban negotiators for the release of the Bay of Pigs prisoners, is scheduled from Havana to New York today.

#### BLOC REACTION

Moscow has not yet commented on Castro's letter to U Thant on the removal of the IL-28 bombers. However, Castro's declaration was probably taken at Soviet behest and reflects Moscow's attempt to make US "fulfillment" of pledges on Cuba the main issue in further discussions.

Castro's letter stated that the US has made the presence of the IL-28 bombers on Cuban soil "the crux of the problem." Kuznetsov will probably take the line that the USSR, in agreeing to remove the IL-28s, is meeting all US demands and is entitled to a simultaneous US guarantee not to invade Cuba. Moscow probably hopes that a promise to remove the IL-28s will effectively cancel out the issue of inspection and verification.

Castro's declaration that he will accede to a withdrawal of the IL-28s will probably evoke even more direct propaganda attacks by the Chinese Communists on the USSR. An 18 November People's Daily editorial attacked those "lackeys of US imperialism" who have sought to force the Cuban people "to accept terms which impair their rights and sovereignty."

#### BLOC MILITARY STATUS

No significant change has been detected in the readiness posture of any major bloc command.

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BLOC SHIPPING TO AND FROM CUBA  
(as of 0700 EST 20 November)

There are 23 bloc ships en route to Cuba. Included in this total are 13 dry cargo ships, 5 tankers and 3 passenger ships flying the Soviet flag, one East German dry cargo ship, and one Bulgarian tanker.

Four of the Soviet ships en route are large-hatch ships of the type previously used to carry missiles to Cuba. A fifth such ship, the ORENBURG, was scheduled to arrive in Havana last evening with 5,200 tons of declared general cargo, 3,000 tons of ammonium sulphate, and a deck cargo of about 20 trucks. A sixth large-hatch ship, the OKHOTSK, was scheduled to arrive at Havana on 18 November with a declared cargo of steel billets and steel plates.

In addition to the OKHOTSK and the ORENBURG, there is a third large-hatch ship, the BELOVODSK, at the port of Havana. The BELOVODSK has been there since 4 November unloading a cargo of tractors, automotive equipment, machinery, and helicopters. The POLTAVA, the large-hatch ship which turned back on 23 October to avoid inspection at the quarantine line, now is en route to the Black Sea where she is scheduled to load grain for Cuba.

The other large-hatch ships in the Soviet merchant fleet are not currently active in the Cuban trade. The OMSK is en route to Japan. The BELORETSK and the SIMFEROPOL are in the Black Sea. The SLAVSK is in the Baltic.

In addition to the ships en route to Cuba, there are 13 Soviet dry cargo ships and 6 tankers returning to the USSR from Cuban ports. Among these are the 11 ships returning the 42 ballistic missiles and associated equipment to the USSR. Six of the missile carriers--the

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DIVNOGORSK, FIZIK KURCHATOV, IVAN POLZUNOV, LABINSK, LENINSKY KOMSOMOL AND METALLURG ANASOV--are returning to Black Sea ports. The remaining five--the ALAPAEVSK, ALEKSANDROVSK, ALMETEVSK, BRATSK, and VOLGOLES--are returning to ports in the Baltic.

The known cargoes and estimated time of arrival of the large-hatch ships now en route to Havana are shown in the table below.

STATUS OF LARGE-HATCH SHIPS EN ROUTE CUBA  
AS OF 20 NOVEMBER 1962

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Cargo</u>	<u>ETA</u>
KASIMOV	2,000 tons of vehicles, tractors and equipment, 650 tons preserves, 550 tons of oats, deck cargo of boxes believed to contain helicopters and 11 trucks	Havana 24 Nov
KIMOVSK	3,882 tons - at least a part of which is metals and other industrial equipment	Havana 22 Nov
KRASNOGRAD	Unknown amount of foodstuffs and equipment	Havana 23 Nov
KARACHAEVSK	3,123 tons automotive equipment and deck cargo of 11 trucks; KRASNOGRAD-class ship on maiden trip.	Havana 27 Nov

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